

Tarrant County Central Labor Council

AFL-CIO

4025 RUFE SNOW DRIVE
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76180



(817) 284-1461
Fax (817) 595-4894

February 26, 2009

Ms. Margo McCann, Manager
Texas Ballet Theater
6845 Green Oaks Road
Fort Worth, Texas 76116

Via telecopier and certified U.S. mail

Dear Ms. McCann,

We are writing regarding *Cleopatra*, scheduled for play at Bass Hall March 27, 28 and 29, 2009. As Presidents of the Tarrant County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, and of the Dallas Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association, Local 72-147 of the American Federation of Musicians, we represent 50 Tarrant County local unions having a combined membership of more than 25,000 workers from every sector of organized labor, including 1700 local professional musicians.

We wish to advise you that the Council is united in our opposition to the artistic fraud that Texas Ballet Theater (TBT) has perpetrated upon the citizens of Fort Worth and across North Texas. Your ongoing fraud – the use of “canned” music in lieu of a live orchestra – has risen to a level of depravity hitherto unknown in the arts world through your impending use at Bass Hall of *Cleopatra* recordings that you recently obtained from the government of Communist China.

There are existing contracts between TBT and the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra Association (FWSOA) and The Dallas Opera that have been violated by TBT's actions, and that threaten the livelihood of hundreds of professional musicians. Artistically, it is in the public interest for an orchestra to be in the pit for all ballet performances. The musical ambiance of ballet is realized through the performance of magnificent instrumental orchestrations, which cannot be achieved through recordings such as those you made in Communist China.

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By selling tickets to patrons without acknowledging that they won't be getting what they've paid for, you are cheating the public out of a legitimate ballet performance and robbing professional musicians of their jobs – all for your own selfish interests. The price of a ticket to *Canned Cleopatra* should be equal to the worth of that performance - which in our opinion is far less than fifty percent of regular price. Your policy of replacing the orchestra with canned music must be abandoned immediately.

Unless we receive prompt written assurance, no later than March 2, 2009, that you will honor your obligations to FWSOA, destroy the offensive *Red Chinese Recordings* and return the orchestra to the pit, we will mobilize our entire membership to demonstrate, through the picketing and leafleting of your Bass Hall shows, our intense displeasure over your deplorable actions.

To the extent permitted by applicable law, we intend to disrupt every *Canned Cleopatra* performance and while doing so, we will ask concertgoers to cancel any existing or prospective support for your company.

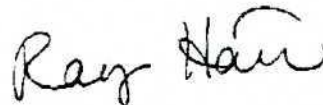
Local arts patrons and the public deserve to know that you traveled to China last summer and paid \$30,000 to a communist government for *Cleopatra* recordings, at a time when you owed FWSOA more than \$150,000. This disgraceful atrocity falls directly upon TBT, *but also indirectly upon Bass Hall* when you are permitted to use those facilities to perpetrate your artistic fraud.

Finally, we will be contacting other union members, musicians, entertainers and arts lovers everywhere to urge them to join with us as we promote our boycott of TBT canned music performances, not only at Bass Hall, but anywhere else that tickets to your phony, fraudulent ballet performances are advertised or offered for distribution or sale. We are extremely disappointed that neither TBT nor Bass Hall understand that eliminating the orchestra does not solve the ballet company's alleged financial problem – it merely exacerbates it.

Very truly yours,



T.C. Gillespie
President
Tarrant County CLC, AFL-CIO



Ray Hair
President
Dallas Fort Worth Professional Musicians Association